

Rotation.org Writing Team EMMAUS

GAMES WORKSHOP PASSAGE

Scripture: Luke 24:13-35 **Memory Verse:** Luke 24:30-31

PURPOSE

See Bible Background.

Objectives for Rotation

See Bible Background.

Objectives for Games Workshop

Discuss the concept of “walking with Jesus” - what does this mean on a daily basis? Discuss the concept of how to recognize Jesus in our own lives today. Discuss the concept of how we welcome newcomers to our faith

(Note: although these are abstract concepts for the youngest Sunday School kids, still try to emphasize them via thought-provoking dialogue.)

PREPARATION

Read Bible Background

Materials List

Bible(s)

Items for Scavenger Hunt - See Advance Preparation for suggestions

Advance Preparation

Assemble items for the Scavenger Hunt. The following list is just a suggestion - use your imagination!

- Cross to symbolize the crucifixion
- Rock (fist size) what one would find on the side of a Hebrew road
- Bread because they ate this with Jesus
- Cup/chalice because they drank this with Jesus
- The number 7 perhaps one from that refrigerator magnet set that we’ve all used with our own kids; if not, then print one up on card stock and laminate it. This is the number of miles they walked to Emmaus.
- A pair of glasses to symbolize “seeing”
- A heart for their “hearts were burning”
- An angel - use clip art and print one on card stock, then laminate it
- The word “Emmaus” - print it out on card stock, then laminate it

- The word “Cleopas” - print it out on card stock, then laminate it
- A white piece of cloth to represent what was left in the tomb after Jesus had risen
- The word “Jesus” - print it out on card stock, then laminate it
- A pair of eyes to symbolize “seeing”
- A small table to symbolize where Jesus ate with them (American Girl doll one is the perfect size)
- An empty tomb - use clip art and print one on card stock, then laminate it
- A Bible

Shortly before your Sunday School, hide the items for the scavenger hunt. Please note that every church will be different, depending on its location. Take into account your church’s physical setting - urban, suburban, or rural. Also take into account the weather - if it’s raining or very muddy (like it is in Maine in April!) - and if necessary, move the activity indoors, hopefully into a large Parish Hall where you can conceal the items.

URBAN: if your church grounds are non-existent, or marginally safe, or are all macadam blacktop, could you use a parish hall instead? If no parish hall is available, use your classroom and perhaps pull the items out of a burlap sackcloth, similar to what a Holy Land traveler would have carried 2000 years ago. If there is a churchyard, keep an eye out for safety first. Keep the children away from streets, crosswalks, the parking lot, etc. Treat small gardens with care, so they don’t get trampled.

SUBURBAN: if there is a church yard, scout it out ahead of time and remove any obstacles, such as large rocks, branches or twigs, litter, etc. Look at the perimeter with a keen eye toward safety - keep the kids away from crosswalks, busy streets, crowded parking lots, etc. Also take into account the sanctuary - will the windows be open? Best not to hide a lot of items right near the church, so their excited cries don’t disturb the congregation. RURAL: same as suburban - your top priority is safety! See above. Definitely make sure you have at least one Shepherd to help you!

PRESENTATION

Open - Introduction

Please start on time. Welcome students and introduce any adults working with you. Have the shepherd take attendance.

Pass Bibles around to the students. Explain to them that in this rotation, we will cover the story of Jesus on the road to Emmaus, which is found only in the Gospel according to Luke in the New Testament. Explain that this is a rather short story, only 18 verses long, and that we will first read the verses together.

(If this is the first week of the rotation, go directly to helping the children find the New Testament, then Luke, then chapter 24, then verse 13. If this is not the first week, engage the children in conversation to see what information they have retained from the previous week(s). If you have the youngest children, i.e., 1st and 2nd graders, have the Shepherd(s) help the children locate the book and verse).

Again, depending on the age group, either read the verses to them, or have several children read short passages. Depending on your style, you can either have them read the story through, and then impart important information, or give the details as you're going along. In either event, please make sure to cover the following and definitely mention the highlighted words:

Luke is the only one of the four Gospels that tells the story of the road to Emmaus. Emmaus was a village about 7 miles from Jerusalem; we do not know its exact location. Two of Jesus' followers were walking along the road - one of them was a man named Cleopas, and Luke does not name the other. Although they were followers of Jesus, they were not among the twelve disciples.

The road on which they were traveling was undoubtedly a simple dirt path that had been cleared of major obstacles. Because the Holy Land served as a land bridge between Egypt and Mesopotamia, important trade and military routes passed through it. By the time of Jesus, the Romans improved the existing routes to ease travel, though the average person could cover only about 18 miles per day.

Try to emphasize just how upset the two travelers must have been. Jesus, the Messiah in whom they so fervently believed, the man who they hoped would free them from bondage to Rome, the man in whom they had placed all their hopes and dreams, had been brutally executed in a public spectacle. Moreover, he had, on the third day, risen from the tomb, just as he had predicted. The events of the past three days gave them much to discuss on their walk.

"Jesus himself came near and went with them", yet they did not recognize him. Why not? This, of course, is the critical question of today's lesson. There could be any number of superficial reasons - they were tired from all the recent excitement, they never expected to see him again, perhaps it was late in the day and the sun was setting - but the deeper, more symbolic reasons are what we are trying to explore. Was it divine intervention that prevented them from recognizing him? Jesus, the patient, wonderful teacher, cajoled his students into recognizing him by carefully listening to their reflections of the past three days. He recounted the Old Testament's prophecies regarding his life and death. And, by recreating the Last Supper in the upper room, he opened their eyes with the simple act of breaking bread with them - and it was at that moment that he vanished from their sight.

They had just walked seven miles, a journey of about 2-3 hours. They were undoubtedly tired - yet their hearts burning, they left right away and returned to Jerusalem to share their incredible story. "The Lord is risen indeed!"

Dig - Main Content

Explain to the children that they will go on a Scavenger Hunt to locate some of the items mentioned in the Bible story.

How you organize the children for the Scavenger Hunt will depend on their ages and on the number of participants. If you have a very small class, they can “hunt” individually. If you have six or eight kids, I would divide them into groups - ideally, no more than four children to a group. The older the children, the more items you’ll need, because they’ll find them more quickly.

Explain the procedure for the activity and guide the children during the process. Please make sure all groups are supervised by an adult.

Reflect - Closure

Once all of the items are discovered, have the children bring them to you. If possible, try to engage them in conversation again about what it means to see Jesus on their own. Gather all of the items so that you have them for the next week. Have the children quietly return to the classroom. Review the Memory Verse with them.

CONTRIBUTOR: Debbie Fisher